DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 296 463 EA 020 127

AUTHOR	Newton, Anne, Comp.
TITLE	Synopsis of Policy Issues across the Northeast/Islands Region, September 1986-August 1987.
INSTITUTION	Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast & Islands, Andover, MA.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	87
CONTRACT	400-86-0005
NOTE	46p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Publication Sales, The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast & Islands, 290 S. Main Street, Andover, MA 01810 ($6.00 plus $2.50 shipping and handling).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Accountability; Certification; Drug Education; Early Childhood Education; Educational Finance; Educational Improvement; Educational Needs; *Educational Policy; Elementary Secondary Education; Health Education; High Risk Students; *Politics of Education; School Effectiveness; Sex Education; *State Action; *State Legislation; Teacher Improvement; Teacher Supply and Demand
IDENTIFIERS	Puerto Rico; United States (Northeast); Virgin Islands

ABSTRACT

For the past 2 years, the Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands has produced issue synopses for distribution to policymakers in New England, New York, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. The purpose of these publications is to acquaint policy makers and their staffs with the major educational issues their colleagues in neighboring states or islands have been acting upon. This synopsis is divided into two sections. The first provides a brief overview of the major issues confronting most of the jurisdictions in the region as well as actions that have been or will be undertaken to address those issues. The major issues covered in the overview include (1) at-risk youth; (2) teacher development; (3) drug, sex, and health education; (4) school improvement; (5) early childhood education; (6) accountability; (7) certification; (8) school finance; and (9) teacher supply and demand. The second section, organized alphabetically by topical area, presents more specific information on action taken by states or islands regarding a particular issue from September 1986 through August 1987. (TE)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

*The **Policy** Group*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED296463

Synopsis of Policy Issues across the Northeast/Islands Region

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

David P. Crandall

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EA020127

The Regional Laboratory
for Educational Improvement of the Northeast & Islands

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SYNOPSIS OF POLICY ISSUES

ACROSS THE NORTHEAST/ISLANDS REGION

September 1986 - August 1987

Compiled by Anne E. Newton

The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main Street, Andover, MA 01810 (617) 470-0098

Contributors to this issue synopsis include:

Karen Berry
Jane deFrees
Cynthia Dubea
Paul Haley
Cathy Harding
Jill Mirman
Patrick Montesano
Lynn Murray
Jan Phlegar
Rosa Santiago-Marazzi
Martha Williams

Helping school people, policy makers, and researchers learn from one another is the primary job of The Regional Laboratory. To do this, we make research findings available to the educational community, conduct short-term research and development projects that meet the needs of practitioners, and convene groups around common issues or problems. Our primary work is with people in state education departments, universities, independent service providers, professional associations, and others who work directly with schools.

This publication is sponsored wholly or in part by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, under contract number 400-86-0005. The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views of the department or any other agency of the U.S. government.

CONTENTS

Introduction. 1

Overview of Current and Emerging Issues in the Region 2

State Actions Regarding Specific Issues 7
- Accountability. 7
- Administrator Attrition 8
- Adult Literacy. 9
- At-Risk Youth 9
- Bilingual Education 15
- Bilingualism. 15
- Business-Education Partnerships 15
- Certification 16
- Compensatory Education. 17
- Drug, Sex, and Health Education 18
- Early Childhood Education 20
- Educational Partnership 21
- Extended School Year. 22
- Gifted and Talented Education 22
- Minority Issues 22
- Physical Education. 22
- Regulation of Private Schools 22
- Reorganization of State Education/Government Agencies 23
- Restructuring Schools 24
- Scholarships. 25
- School District Reorganization. 25
- School Finance. 26
- School Improvement. 27
- School Violence 30
- Special Education 31
- Strategic Planning. 32
- Teacher Development 32
- Teacher Evaluation. 36
- Teacher Negotiations. 36
- Teacher Salaries. 36
- Teacher Supply and Demand 37
- Technology. 38
- Values Education. 39
- Vocational Education. 39

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The preparation and production of this publication has involved the time and energy of many individuals. In addition to the contributors listed behind the title page, I would like to thank Jerry Asselin, Mitzi Barrett, Barbara Berns, Doug Blanchard, Ross Brewer, Sally Dias, Margie Edwards, Nancy Finkelstein, Dan French, Ray Kingsbury, Jack MacDonald, Donn McCafferty, Bob McNamara, Nancy Richardson, Sandra Robinson, Mary Ellen Sacco, Larry Schaefer, Carole Thomson, Robert Trombly, Laurie Waite, Doug Walker, Polly Ward, and Carol Wishcamper. Each of them took time out of their busy work lives to review portions of the document for the accuracy and comprehensiveness of information on their state. Last, but not least, the efforts of Janet Angelis, who ably edited the final version, and Richard Basom, who reviewed various drafts and offered support throughout the entire process, must be acknowledged.

AN

INTRODUCTION

For the past two years, The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands has produced issue synopses for distribution to policy makers in New England, New York, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. The purpose of these publications is to acquaint policy makers and their staffs with the major educational issues their colleagues in neighboring states or islands have been or are acting upon.

With comments from its recipients and reviewers, the frequency and format of the synopsis has changed since its inception in January 1986. Originally a quarterly publication, it is now published annually. The initial format -- organized by jurisdiction -- has been replaced by one organized by topical area, thereby enabling the reader to review the actions of all states or islands in regard to a specific topic without searching through the entire document. For purposes of clarity, there are also subcategories within each topical area that indicate the placement of various actions within the policy-making process (e.g., legislation passed, legislative appropriations, programmatic actions, state board actions, recommendations from task forces and commissions, and legislation proposed). Finally, a table of contents has been added so that readers can proceed directly to those topics that are of most interest to them (e.g., at-risk youth, school improvement).

The process followed in creating this issue synopsis also varied slightly from that used in the previous year. The first draft of information on issues and activities in each state or island was created from information resources at The Regional Laboratory (i.e., news releases from departments of education, newsletters, newspaper articles, task force and commission reports, reports from Laboratory staff working in the field). These drafts were reviewed and revised by Laboratory staff, usually with the assistance of educators in the field. These versions were then reviewed and revised by key individuals in each state or island from such organizations as the department of education, the state board, the governor's office, the legislature, and/or professional associations. The final document emerged from the incorporation of the comments from these reviewers. While we strived for maximum accuracy, any errors, omissions, or misinterpretations remain the responsibility of the compiler.

The issue synopsis is divided into two sections. The first provides a brief overview of the major issues confronting most of the jurisdictions in the region as well as actions that have been or will be undertaken to address those issues. The second, organized alphabetically by topical area, presents more specific information on actions taken by states or islands regarding a particular issue from September 1986 through August 1987.[1]

---

[1] The latter date is quite flexible. As revisions were received through the middle of December, readers will note that occasionally information has been updated beyond 31 August 1987.

I. OVERVIEW OF CURRENT AND EMERGING ISSUES IN THE REGION

From September 1986 through August 1987, the issues receiving the most attention in the Northeast/Islands region were: at-risk youth; teacher development; drug, sex, and health education; school improvement; early childhood education; accountability; certification, primarily of teachers; school finance; and teacher supply and demand. These issues are listed in order of frequency based on known activities as identified through news releases and information from staff at the departments of education, newsletters, newspaper articles, task force and commission reports, and reports from Laboratory staff working in the field. Although actions on these issues are dealt with in more detail in Section II, the discussion below seeks to give a brief overview of actions across the region (CT, MA, ME, NH, NY, RI, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and VT).

AT-RISK YOUTH - All nine jurisdictions attended to the problems of at-risk youth in 1986-87. For the most part, technical assistance and funds were provided to local school districts to develop or continue dropout prevention programs (CT, MA, ME, NY, RI). In most instances, the funds were targeted to districts with high dropout rates or poor performance on statewide, standardized tests.

Several states addressed teenage pregnancy and parenting skills (CT, MA, ME, NY, VT); two encouraged partnerships between universities and local districts to provide services to students identified as being at risk of truancy and academic failure (NY, PR); one provided funds for rural dropout prevention programs (NY); two encouraged interagency programmatic solutions (MA, NY); one offered grants to some districts to serve students at risk of health problems (MA); one required school districts to provide services to incarcerated youth (NY), while another continued to press the legislature to provide similar services (VT); and one aimed its efforts at reaching out to students who had already dropped out of school (PR). Rhode Island has embarked upon the development of curriculum to promote early success and prevent students from dropping out of school. One state has passed comprehensive legislation to improve literacy and reduce the state's dropout rate (RI), while two have proposed legislation (PR, VT).

Actions at the state level regarding at-risk youth are not likely to diminish. Commissioners of education, state boards, and/or governors in several states have identified at-risk youth as one of their priorities in the coming year (CT, ME, NH, NY, VT). Implementation of legislative and programmatic efforts will keep it high on the list of all nine jurisdictions. Future actions will include the development of an incentive system to encourage local school systems in Maine to decrease their dropout rates and a comprehensive health education curriculum for grades K-12 in Vermont.

TEACHER DEVELOPMENT - Efforts aimed at teacher development were initiated or proposed in seven states or islands. Those initiated included the creation and/or expansion of mentor teacher programs (CT, NY); a required one-year internship for all working, uncertified teachers (NY); the

development of a program to support student teachers (CT); the recognition of teachers and their exemplary programs (CT, MA, PR); the encouragement and continuation of professional development activities at the local and/or state level (CT, MA); the development of model teacher career incentive programs (CT); and the collaboration of state education agencies and universities to connect their programs with people and needs at the local level (ME). Among those proposed were the establishment of a statewide coordinating office for professional development activities (ME), the establishment of a network of Professional Development Schools (MA), and the creation of a pilot mentor teacher program (RI). In addition, the governor in Puerto Rico called on teachers and their unions to establish standards for the profession and the Commission on Educational Reform addressed the improvement of the quality of teaching on the island.

The impact of recommendations of the reports by The Holmes Group and the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy are being felt in the region. One state (RI) has a legislative committee studying the implications of the possible implementation of the recommendations of both reports in the state. Two states have proposed the development of Carnegie Schools (MA, VT); and two, the institution of a requirement for a liberal arts degree at the undergraduate level and the completion of a masters degree to obtain a teaching certificate (MA, NY).

DRUG, SEX, AND HEALTH EDUCATION - A third group of issues receiving widespread attention is drug, sex, and health education. Initiatives to combat alcohol and substance abuse were undertaken in four states (CT, ME, NH, NY). Most involved the provision of information, the development of curriculum, or training and were done by the department of education in collaboration with other state agencies.

In regard to sex and health education, state board action has mandated the establishment of a comprehensive school health program for the elementary schools (K-6) in New York and a full curriculum on sex and family life in Rhode Island. A task force in Vermont has proposed the development of a comprehensive health education curriculum by 1992. Puerto Rico has developed and implemented a curriculum on cancer prevention for the seventh grade.

Three states have developed or are developing teaching guides on AIDS prevention (MA, NY, RI). Efforts in Massachusetts and New York have also included teacher training.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT - Revising standards, funding programs, providing technical assistance, and proposing future actions dominated school improvement activities in the region. Public school approval standards in Vermont were revised and minimum standards for elementary schools (K-8) were revised and adopted in New Hampshire.

Funds were appropriated for initiatives in four states (MA, NH, NY, RI). Technical assistance was or will be offered to districts by departments of education in Connecticut and Vermont. A long-range, statewide plan and a local school implementation model for school improvement was developed by

the New Hampshire Alliance for Effective Schools.

Using educational research to improve schools in Maine and supporting the New Hampshire School Improvement Project are among the priorities of those state's commissioners for 1987-88. The state board in New Hampshire is working on revising its minimum standards for junior high schools. Governor Kunin's proposal for a School Improvement Fund will come before the Vermont Legislature again during its next session. The Massachusetts Legislature is considering an expansion of the decision-making power of school improvement councils and the rewarding of schools and professionals who improve the learning of their students.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION - Efforts related to early childhood education -- primarily the provision of public kindergarten and preschool programs for the disadvantaged -- have received attention in six states (CT, MA, NH, NY, RI, VT). New Hampshire's newly adopted elementary school standards strongly urge districts to provide public kindergarten, while the Vermont Legislature mandated its provision in every town by 1 July 1988.

Funds have been allocated in four states to encourage the development of early childhood programs (CT, MA, RI, VT) and two states have increased their appropriations (MA, NY). In addition to financial support, various entities in Massachusetts have produced a report on future trends in early childhood and day care, drafted standards for early childhood programs, and drafted an early childhood teaching certificate; established minimum entry level salaries for Head Start positions; and developed guidelines for a Head Start Expansion Program.

Assistance and support in this area is not likely to lessen in 1987-88. Findings of a legislative task force on school entrance age will be presented to the Maine Legislature during its second session. Vermont's State Board has recommended the expansion of its newly funded Early Education Grant Program, and Connecticut has proposed a new program to provide funds to establish demonstration programs for 3- and 4-year-olds and their families.

ACCOUNTABILITY - Actions undertaken in regard to accountability related to collecting data on or assessing student achievement, presenting that information to the public or to branches of government, and establishing statewide goals or standards. Of the six states active in this area, two addressed the collection of data (NY, VT); one upgraded its testing program (CT); one set minimum standards to be applied to basic skills testing (MA); one funded a pilot Educational Indicators Program (VT); one utilized data from testing in grades 3, 5, 7, and 11 to develop and implement plans to meet student needs (VI); one mandated an annual report concerning the schools from the regents to the governor and the legislature (NY); another established a task force to develop a report card to provide information to the public at the state and local levels (ME); and two state boards adopted or revised standards or goals for education (CT, MA).

CERTIFICATION - Activity regarding the certification of education personnel has occurred in five states -- much of it feeding into or reinforcing steps

mounted in terms of teacher development. Revised requirements for certification and licensure have been or will be put into place in two states (CT, ME). Support systems for beginning teachers have been piloted in Maine and legislated in New York. An iter analysis of standardized tests for teachers to determine their fairness and equity has been embarked upon in Rhode Island. Among the proposals now being considered are the establishment of a professional standards board (CT), a liberal arts degree at the undergraduate level (MA, NY), a master's degree for full certification (MA), subject matter testing for prospective teachers (NY), and an increase in academic requirements for certification in some subjects (NY).

SCHOOL FINANCE - Implementation of recent educational reforms and concerns for equity prompted action on school finance in five states. Once the costs of implementing educational reforms were calculated, questions arose regarding school finance in New Hampshire. Two task forces -- created by the commissioner and the governor, respectively -- were appointed to study the impact of reform and to review school finance in Maine.

During the past year, Vermont approved a new school finance foundation formula and two states (MA, NY) continued to support programs to equalize spending across districts. In Maine, a legislative proposal to increase state aid to 65% by 1992 was held over for further discussion in the second legislative session.

Deliberation of these issues will continue through 1987-88. Solutions to school finance issues are on the agenda in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont.

TEACHER SUPPLY AND DEMAND - As evidence for or against an impending teacher shortage surfaced nationally, activities to relate this phenomenon to individual states in the region were undertaken or reported. Although there are or may be shortages in particular areas or subjects, the central issues for the region appear to be quality rather than quantity and the recruitment and retention of minorities, particularly in urban areas.

Two states released studies: one, an examination of teacher supply and demand in Massachusetts; the other, a review of the attrition rate for teachers in Vermont. In addition, a task force in Vermont presented recommendations in areas of teacher recruitment, teacher preparation and certification, compensation, and working conditions. Its action plan is to be available in early 1988.

In response to anticipated vacancies in the next five years, the commissioner in Massachusetts proposed an apprentice teacher position. New York established a Teacher Career Recruitment Clearinghouse and began a program to distribute funds to higher education institutions for initiatives to draw minorities into teaching.

Extensions and outcomes of these activities will keep this issue alive. In addition, over the next three years, the chief state school officers in New England and New York and staff of The Regional Laboratory will work toward

the development of a regional common market for teacher supply and demand in the Northeast.

Overall, attention to educational issues has not waned in the Northeast and Islands. Issues of major importance in 1985-86 (e.g., at-risk youth, teacher development, accountability, teacher supply and demand) continued to be at the forefront in 1986-87. Some issues claimed more attention in 1986-87 than they had in the previous year. Among those are drug, sex, and health education; early childhood education; and certification. Further information on these and other issues is contained in the following section.

II. STATE ACTIONS REGARDING SPECIFIC ISSUES

ACCOUNTABILITY

Legislation Passed

Legislation (effective 5 August 1987) requires the **New York** Board of Regents, as of 1 January 1989, to submit to the governor, the president pro tem of the senate, and the speaker of the assembly an annual report concerning the schools of the state. The report will include enrollment trends, various indicators of student achievement, and information concerning teacher and administrator preparation, turnover, inservice education, and performance. To the extent practicable, such information will be displayed on both a statewide and an individual district basis and by racial/ethnic group and gender.

The **Vermont** Legislature approved the development and implementation of a comprehensive data collection process for the department's statistics unit. It also passed School District Audit Legislation that requires school districts to keep their financial accounts in a professional manner and to subject these accounts to a review by outside auditors every three years. Supervisory unions must have professional audits annually.

Legislative Appropriations

The legislature in **Connecticut** appropriated funds to begin a Mastery Testing Program in grades 4, 6, and 8 in the 1986-87 school year. The test sets higher standards and expectations for the state's students than the Proficiency Testing Program, which was administered for the last time in October 1986.

In April 1987, the **New York** Legislature appropriated $5.5 million to develop and implement a statewide, computerized student-information system to track student progress.

The **Vermont** Legislature allocated $75,000 to fund a pilot Educational Indicators Program, which will measure one area of student achievement.

Programmatic Actions

Public school students in grades 3, 5, 7, and 11 in the **Virgin Islands** took the Metropolitan Achievement Test in May to assist the department in formulating, developing, and implementing plans to meet student educational needs.

State Board Actions

In January 1987, the state board of education adopted Connecticut's Common Core of Learning "as its standard of an educated citizen and as its policy on the skills, knowledge and attitudes that are expected of Connecticut's public secondary school graduates."

In April 1987, the **Massachusetts** Board of Education adopted "Goals for Education in Massachusetts." Among the new goals that were established are: physical and emotional well-being, critical thinking and communication skills, citizenship in a democratic society, values and mutual respect, arts appreciation and creativity, understanding history and the humanities, understanding mathematics and the sciences, occupational competence, and the capacity and desire for lifelong learning. In addition, the board adopted a statement that set forth its mission "to provide leadership and advocacy for the best education for all the people of the Commonwealth."

In May 1987, the **Massachusetts** Board of Education established minimum standards that will be applied to all basic skills testing beginning in October 1987. The board established 65 percent as the passing standard for reading and mathematics tests at all grade levels. In addition, the board adopted a writing sample that will serve as the standard for passing the writing test.

In May 1987, the **Massachusetts** Board of Education also voted to amend regulations for the second round of statewide tests under the Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program. These tests will be given in grades 4, 8, and 12, rather than in grades 3, 7, and 11 as done previously. This will enable comparisons to be drawn with data from the National Assessment for Educational Progress.

Recommendations of Task Forces and Commissions

In August 1987, Commissioner Bither appointed a Report Card for **Maine** Schools Task Force consisting of representatives of public education, business and industry, and the public at large. The report card will be used as a vehicle to provide information to local districts and the public on education statistics from a local, state, and national perspective as well as goals for education and areas for school improvement at the local and state levels. The task force, which meets monthly, will issue a report in early spring of 1988.

ADMINISTRATOR ATTRITION

Research

Results of a preliminary study released by the **Vermont** Department of Education found that 22 percent of the state's principals and assistant principals left the profession in 1984-85. The Vermont Headmasters'

Association is working with the department to determine why principals are leaving.

ADULT LITERACY

Legislative Appropriations

In **New York**, the legislature appropriated $2 million for a Workplace Literacy Grant Program designed to address the problem of illiteracy in the workplace. The funds will be distributed to labor unions on a competitive grant basis by the New York State Education Department.

Programmatic Actions

On 1 July 1987, Commonwealth Literacy Corps -- a $600,000 initiative proposed by Governor Dukakis in his FY 1987-88 budget -- took effect. Its goal is to help illiterate adults among the 25 percent of **Massachusetts'** population who have not graduated from high school. Over the next two years, the Literacy Corps plans to recruit, train, and supervise 3,000 volunteer tutors.

Recommendations of Task Forces and Commissions

In January 1987, a draft of the Adult Education Implementation Plan was submitted to the **Massachusetts** Board of Education by the Task Force on Adult Education. Among the recommendations were the following: improving coordination and collaboration among existing resources and developing strategies to prevent illiteracy; strengthening adult education as a distinct profession; coordinating a comprehensive statewide system for delivery of basic adult education services and focusing department efforts on improving basic literacy skills; and improving the effectiveness of adult education instruction by encouraging the use of technology and developing a system to evaluate effectiveness.

AT-RISK YOUTH

Legislation Passed

Work of the past year by Commissioner Earhart, with the support of Governor DiPrete and the legislature, culminated in the enactment of the Literacy and Dropout Prevention Act in late June 1987. As initially proposed by Commissioner Earhart, it will be a multi-million dollar program to improve literacy and reduce the dropout rate in **Rhode Island**. The bill has five major components which require that:

- School districts screen all children prior to, or upon their first entry to school in order to determine their level of educational readiness in literacy skills (reading, writing, speaking,

listening, and mathematics);

- School districts focus their K-3 instruction for all students on literacy outcomes specified by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education. This component also urges that class sizes be reduced to 15 students;

- School districts provide supplementary literacy instruction for educationally disadvantaged students in grades K-12. Program emphases for supplementary instruction are described as follows:

    - o intensive development in literacy - grades K-3
    - o early intervention in literacy - grades 4-6
    - o remediation in literacy - grades 7-8
    - o intensive remediation in literacy - grades 9-12

- The department of education support projects that address the academic, social, and personal needs of potential dropouts. The selection of such projects will be at the discretion of the commissioner of elementary and secondary education;

- The department of education plan for implementation and monitoring of components described. There will be a broadly based representative advisory council established to advise the commissioner and his staff.

The commissioner will begin the implementation of the act in the 1987-88 school year.

Legislative Appropriations

The **Connecticut** Legislature appropriated $750,000 for a Dropout Prevention Grant to enable 25 school districts that demonstrate the greatest problem in retaining students to develop and implement long-range plans for reducing the dropout rate.

The **Connecticut** Legislature also appropriated $244,000 for a Young Parents Program to assist school districts to plan, develop, and implement education programs with day care components in school settings for young parents.

In April 1987, the **New York** Legislature appropriated $7 million for a Youth-at-Risk and Community Partnership Program that will allow school districts to apply for competitive grants of up to $200,000 for programs addressing such problems as drug and alcohol abuse, adolescent pregnancy, nutrition, and suicide prevention. The legislature also appropriated $1 million for a Rural Dropout Prevention Grant Program designed to address the dropout problem in rural areas.

In April, the legislature in **New York** also appropriated $1 million for a Parenting Education Program. Its purposes are to assist parents in

acquiring child development education and parenting skills and to encourage parents to become involved in their children's education.

In April 1987, the legislature in **Puerto Rico** appropriated $1 million for dropout prevention programs and another $1 million for the development of Innovative Programs. In addition, programs related to dropout prevention are eligible for funds through Innovative Programs grants.

Programmatic Actions

Through Chapter 188, the School Improvement Act of 1985 in **Massachusetts**, the Dropout Prevention Grant Program has distributed $2.3 million to 39 districts with documented high dropout rates over the past three years, and the Remedial Grant Program has distributed $6.9 million to 95 districts with high concentrations of students failing basic skills tests. Technical assistance is provided by staff from the department of education to the districts with dropout prevention programs.

In February 1987, Governor Dukakis requested $1 million for Commonwealth Futures. This program is sponsored and funded by the state offices of health and human services, training and employment, and education in **Massachusetts**. Its aim is to assist communities with dropout problems to develop and implement communitywide prevention plans. Six communities with high dropout rates have participated in the program during the past year. A second wave of six communities will be selected in October 1987.

Throughout the year, the governor's office sponsored one state and four regional conferences on "Bringing Down the Barriers to Opportunity in **Massachusetts**." Targeted for local municipal and school officials and representatives of community agencies and businesses, the conferences highlighted model programs in dropout prevention, adult illiteracy, drug and alcohol abuse, and teenage pregnancy.

The governor's Office of Human Services has established a Challenge Fund, with $1 million from the legislature, that will provide six to eight communities in **Massachusetts** with funds to plan and implement teen pregnancy and parenting services and prevention efforts.

The Comprehensive Health Education and Human Services Grant Program (funded at $1.3 million) will provide grants to 32 districts in **Massachusetts** in FY 1988 to serve students at risk of health problems. It encourages the establishment of a comprehensive pre-kindergarten through grade 12 health education curriculum, the reorganization of guidance and counseling to more effectively assist students at risk of health problems, and linkage with community agencies in order to coordinate service delivery.

In September 1986, the **New York** Board of Regents expanded the school Attendance Improvement and Dropout Prevention Program by requiring that participating schools provide services to pregnant students, students who are parents, and students who live in temporary housing. The ten percent

of the state's school districts with the poorest attendance ratio are eligible for the program. Each district must submit a comprehensive plan to receive funds. In addition, the board approved regulations which require school districts to provide educational services to youth who are incarcerated in county correctional facilities located within their districts. The regulations apply to all youth under 21 years of age.

In June 1987, the **New York** State Education Department awarded $1.5 million in "Stay in School Partnership" grants to 10 colleges or universities for joint projects with local school districts for 1987-88. The grants enable colleges to provide support services and compensatory activities for public school pupils identified as having a high risk of truancy and academic failure.

In January 1987, Governor Hernandez-Colon announced an initiative to provide recreational, cultural, and educational after-school services to children in schools located in areas with a high incidence of social problems. In June 1987, the Puerto Rican government -- with recommendations from the Sub-Committee for the Study of Crime in **Puerto Rico** -- agreed to help fund the establishment of another Sor Isolina Ferre Center to serve the Caimito section of San Juan.

The University of **Puerto Rico** is working with San Juan District II, a low achieving school district designated by Secretary Roque, to develop school improvement teams and specific projects to enhance student achievement. After six months of planning, specific projects will be implemented in the schools this fall.

In June 1987, Governor Hernandez-Colon formally announced a program -- funded at $3.2 million -- to reach 20,000 children in **Puerto Rico** between the ages of 6 and 15 who have dropped out of school in the last two years. Teachers, counselors, and social workers visited the homes of each school dropout during the summer as part of a needs assessment that will enable a planning committee to devise options for youth to use their time more effectively. Each professional was responsible for designing an individualized plan for each child that could include returning to school, community work, job training, and/or options in sports, music, and arts.

In June 1987, the **Puerto Rico** chapter of the American Association of University Women awarded a grant to the Atrevete program that helps persons complete their junior high or high school education. Atrevete also offers a literacy program, drug and alcohol counseling, and counseling to teenaged mothers. This community-based program is housed in the largest housing project in San Juan.

The **Rhode Island** Department of Education is developing a pilot literacy based curriculum for grades K-3 with four school districts. Funds from the Literacy and Dropout Prevention Act will assist in implementing this program.

State Board Actions - Proposed

In March 1987, the **New York** Board of Regents approved a plan to reduce the state's dropout rate. Components of the plan included provision of an extended school day for working youth, remediation, parent-school partnerships (in particular, reports on progress to parents every three months), school-business partnerships, leaves of absences for students, education of teachers in the characteristics of special needs students, special programs for adolescent parents, and community outreach.

Recommendations of Task Forces and Commissions

In 1986, the governor's Task Force on Adolescent Pregnancy in **Maine** released its report, Adolescent Pregnancy: The Challenge, A Framework for Prevention and Parenting. It offered strategies to be utilized by families, teenagers, communities, schools, clergy and religious organizations, the media, the health/medical community, the social service community, employers and the business community, and government to prevent adolescent pregnancy and parenting.

In January 1987, an Advisory Committee on Truants, Dropouts, and Alternative Programs appointed by the commissioner of education released its report, Staying Power - Leaving School Too Soon. It recommended legislative, departmental, and local board action to reduce truancy and dropping out in **Maine**. As part of a comprehensive community-based strategy (K-12), the report supports the development in schools of alternative education programs for at-risk students.

Governor Kunin formed a Task Force on Teenage Pregnancy in January 1987. Its members included the commissioners of health, education, social welfare, and employment training. In its final report, the task force identified goals to be reached in **Vermont** by 1992, recommended actions to be undertaken, and offered a plan to realize the goals. Among the goals to be reached by 1992 were:

- to reduce by 50 percent the pregnancy rate for those 15-17 years of age;
- to reduce by 50 percent the number of live births for 15-17 year-old women from 19 per 1,000 women to 10 per 1,000 women, without increasing the abortion rate;
- to eliminate all pregnancies among girls under the age of 15; and
- to ensure that all Vermont children complete high school or the equivalent.

Among its recommendations to achieve these goals were:

- to train health care providers to deal with teenagers;

- to authorize a study by health and human services staff to determine whether there is a connection between "high risk" families and teenage pregnancies;
- to increase parental involvement in prevention programs and decisions;
- to provide job opportunities;
- to enlist community support; and
- to launch a media campaign to boost the self-esteem of teenagers and encourage them to not give in to peer pressure.

The task force's plan includes the development of a health education curriculum for kindergarten through high school students in all Vermont communities by 1992 and a comprehensive health care plan for adolescents that provides confidential information on pregnancy prevention.

Governor Farrelly has announced his support of the efforts of the Generation At Risk Task Force, a nationwide project of the National Governors' Association. The governor and Commissioner Creque urged the **Virgin Islands** community to view a special presentation of the "Generation at Risk" film and the follow-up panel discussion.

Legislation - Proposed

Two legislators in **Puerto Rico** sponsored the inclusion of a trust fund in the education reform bill, with contributions from the private sector, for the development of talented children. They believe that there are a significant number of talented children among the students who drop out of school.

In January, Governor Kunin proposed a "Second Chance" program that sought to reclaim at-risk youth and adults in **Vermont** who had not completed their secondary education. Since a favorable vote on the program was not rendered during this legislative session, the proposal will be brought up again in the next session.

Programmatic Actions - Proposed

In April 1987, Commissioner Bither set a goal to raise **Maine's** current high school completion rate from 78 to 90 percent by 1991. She asked the Advisory Committee on Truancy, Dropouts, and Alternative Education to design an incentive system for local schools to decrease their dropout rates and a foundation involving business and educational communities to increase the aspirations of the state's youth.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Legislation - Proposed

In February 1987, a bill (S238) was introduced to make bilingual education a local option in **Massachusetts**. Senate 238 was attached to House 3804 -- a more comprehensive bill that would strengthen bilingual education. At present, it is in the House Ways and Means Committee.

BILINGUALISM

Controversy over bilingualism has been evident over the past year in **Puerto Rico**. Following the International Symposium on Bilingualism in January 1987, advocates of both sides of the issue have expressed their opinions. Dr. Humberto Lopez Morales, Director of the Institute of Linguistics at the University of Puerto Rico, argues that despite the research-based knowledge that bilingualism has positive effects on the cognitive processes related to the development of intelligence, most Puerto Ricans continue to greet bilingualism with skepticism. Their skepticism is due primarily from the experience of Puerto Ricans on the mainland -- where bilingual programs are conceived as merely a transitory phase on the way towards monolingualism in English.

Dr. Hernan Sulsona, a former secretary of education, urged delay of English classes until the second grade for elementary school students. He claimed that this measure may actually enhance the learning of English after second grade. In like manner, the President of the Ateneo Puertorriqueno, Morales Coll, emphasized that research has shown that children can learn a second language best when they are proficient in the basics of their first language, which is usually in the fourth grade.

BUSINESS-EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS

State Board Actions

The **New York** Board of Regents established criteria for awarding $100,000 in enterprise challenge grants to encourage cooperative programs between public schools and business and industry in entrepreneurial education.

Legislation - Proposed

In January 1987, legislation was filed in **Massachusetts** to create a statewide Urban Education Partnership that replicates Boston's ACCESS program. This legislation proposed partnerships among public schools, colleges, and private industry that would provide high school counseling and college scholarships for qualified students. Eligible districts would be those with higher than average rates of families receiving AFDC and lower than average achievement levels on statewide tests. At present, this bill (H2716) is in the House Ways and Means Committee.

CERTIFICATION

Legislation Passed

As of 1 May 1987, in order to enter teacher preparation programs and seek a **Connecticut** teaching certificate, prospective teachers must pass the Connecticut Competency Examination for Prospective Teachers (CONNCEPT) or receive a waiver from the examination if their combined Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) score is at least 1,000 or their composite American College Testing Program Assessment (ACT) score is at least 24.

In accord with the **Connecticut** Education Enhancement Act (EEA) of 1986, all current permanent and standard teaching certificates will be converted to new "professional educator" certification beginning 1 July 1988. Licenses will be renewable upon proof that a teacher participates in 90 hours of professional development within a 5-year period. The Connecticut Education Association unsuccessfully challenged this clause early in 1987 on the grounds that it deprived teachers of property rights without due process.

The new laws governing teacher and administrator certification in **Maine** go into effect in July 1988. These laws were introduced separately from the Educational Reform Act of 1984, with teacher certification changes emerging in April 1984 and administrator changes coming in the spring of 1985. The teacher certification law is a three-tiered one, distinguishing entry-level teachers from professional and master levels, and provides for a local support system comprised mostly of teachers. Administrator certification differentiates initial competencies from renewal standards for professional certificates. The state board expects to adopt draft rules for the law in October 1987.

The legislature passed a bill that provides for an item analysis of standardized tests for teachers being utilized by the **Rhode Island** Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education. It also creates an advisory commission to report to the general assembly on the effect of standardized tests on persons of varying racial, ethnic, linguistic, and gender backgrounds and to consider possible methods to assure the fairness and equity of such tests.

Legislative Appropriations

The legislature in **Connecticut** appropriated $1.8 million for Exams for Teachers-in-Training to implement the competency exam (CONNCEPT) and to develop assessment instruments in subject matter knowledge and professional knowledge (teaching ability).

Programmatic Actions

Twenty teacher certification pilot sites and three administrator certification study sites have been operating for two years in **Maine**.

The pilot sites have developed support systems for incoming teachers and administrators and have wrestled with competencies and renewal standards for teachers and administrators in the state. At present, all initial applicants for teacher certification in the state must take the National Teachers Examination. Qualifying scores for passage are scheduled to take effect on 1 July 1988.

State Board Actions - Proposed

In June 1987, a 15-member committee appointed by the state board of education recommended that a professional standards board be established in **Connecticut**.

In March 1987, the **New York** Board of Regents proposed that every teacher must have an undergraduate academic major, that new teachers -- prior to hiring -- must pass a test in the subject matter in which they will be certified, that all beginning teachers participate in a one-year internship program, and that academic requirements be increased in some subjects (e.g., foreign language).

Recommendations of Task Forces and Commissions

Chancellor Jenifer and Commissioner Raynolds convened a Task Force on Teacher Preparation in **Massachusetts** that recently approved a set of recommendations to improve teacher education in the state. These recommendations include a two-stage certification process that emphasizes a liberal arts curriculum at the undergraduate level and requires a master's degree for full certification. The board of education will consider these recommendations at its October meeting.

COMPENSATORY EDUCATION

Legislative Appropriations

In April 1987, the **New York** Legislature appropriated $40.5 million for a new program, Aid for Pupils with Compensatory Educational Needs, to diagnose and assist students with compensatory educational needs in the state's five largest urban areas.

State Board Actions

The **New York** Board of Regents amended the regulations pertaining to special aid for non-public school students. The amendment established procedures for payment of $10 million in 1986-87 school year to certain districts in New York that provide remedial services to educationally disadvantaged non-public school students under Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act.

DRUG, SEX, AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Legislation Passed

During 1987, legislation passed in **New York** created an Alcohol and Substance Abuse Education Clearinghouse. The clearinghouse will provide schools, health and social service agencies, professional societies and organizations, and other interested parties with information regarding model programs, curricula, publications, available technical assistance, and professional studies.

The legislature in **New York** amended a section of the Education Law (effective 6 April 1987) to provide immunity from civil liability to teachers, administrators, and other school district staff members for reporting suspected alcohol abuse by students to school officials or parents.

Legislative Appropriations

In February 1987, new state and federal funding became available to assist school districts in **Connecticut** in the development and implementation of education programs focusing on substance abuse.

Programmatic Actions

In October 1986, Commissioner Tirozzi announced 20 recommendations prompted by the fact that drug and alcohol abuse had replaced discipline as the number one problem in public schools. His recommendations included proposals that the **Connecticut** State Department of Education hire a full-time health education consultant with experience in drug and alcohol abuse, develop a model health education program, and develop drug and alcohol education workshops for teachers.

Since 1979, the Division of Alcohol and Drug Education in the **Maine** Department of Educational and Cultural Services has trained school-community teams in approximately 60 percent of the local school administrative units. The teams receive training in drug and alcohol issues, write policies for the districts and create prevention and education programs for substance abusers. One prevention program, Project Graduation, has become a national model for encouraging chemical-free school activities. Another Maine initiative works with athletic coaches to create policies for preventing substance abuse among sports participants. The programs of the Division of Alcohol and Drug Education are supported in part by a tax premium on the sale of alcohol. The use of this money is overseen by the legislature and coordinated by the departments of correction, human services, mental health, and education and cultural services.

The state board of education's Task Force on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention has produced New Hampshire's Resource Guide for Alcohol and

Drug Education, which includes information on **New Hampshire** education laws, state board of education policy, curriculum recommendations, guidelines for policy reform, statewide information and referral services, and New Hampshire resources for drug and alcohol information.

The **New York** State Education Department, with the assistance of the State Division of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse and the State Division of Substance Abuse Services, developed a K-12 alcohol and drug abuse prevention curriculum and distributed it to all public and non-public schools in the state in January 1987. A three-tiered turnkey training program, extending from mid-January through the end of the summer, will be utilized to train teachers to effectively use the curriculum materials.

Through a legislative initiative, funds for planning and implementation of comprehensive health education and human services for **Massachusetts** schools has been in effect since 1986. The departments of education and public health have cooperatively developed Learn and Live - A Teaching Guide on AIDS Prevention. The guide was distributed this summer to public school superintendents, school committee chairpersons, and school principals throughout the state. The departments of education and public health will conduct training sessions for teams from 72 school districts at six regional training sessions from October through December 1987.

In July 1987, the **New York** Board of Regents offered an AIDS Instructional Guide (K-3, 4-6, 7-8, and 9-12) to school districts. The 200-page booklet leaves the final decision about when to introduce the subject and what curriculum would be appropriate to the school districts. In addition, the regents approved the distribution of $975,000 in state and federal funds currently available to conduct teacher training workshops throughout the state.

The department of education in **Puerto Rico**, with the support of the American Cancer Society, developed and implemented a cancer information and prevention curriculum at the seventh grade level.

Governor DiPrete and the **Rhode Island** Board of Regents called for comprehensive AIDS education in the public schools. Representatives in the health and education departments are continuing to work on curriculum materials for grades K-12. AIDS education will focus on the causes of the disease, treatment, prevention, and sexual abstinence.

State Board Actions

In September 1986, the **New York** Board of Regents approved regulations to establish a comprehensive school health education demonstration program for elementary schools (K-6). It is designed to develop and enhance children's health knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavior and to reduce the incidence of adolescent pregnancy, alcohol and drug abuse, and suicide.

Recommendations of Task Forces and Commissions

The **New Hampshire** Board of Education organized a task force with representatives from key organizations to provide input to the state board in developing recommendations for parents, schools, legislature, judiciary, and law enforcement agencies on preventing substance abuse.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Legislation Passed

Legislation mandates the provision of kindergarten in every town in **Vermont** by 1 July 1988. Twenty towns in the state are still without kindergartens.

Legislative Appropriations

The **Connecticut** Legislature appropriated $1 million (state board requested $5 million) for an Extended-Day Kindergarten Grant to assist school districts interested in operating an extended-day program. Support will be provided for both planning and operation.

The **Massachusetts** Legislature appropriated $4.5 million in FY 88 for grants to Head Start programs. The legislative intent for these funds was to increase the salaries of Head Start staff in order to attract and retain qualified staff ($3 million) and to increase the number of children in the state who receive Head Start services ($1.5 million). In FY 87 the legislature appropriated $2.8 million for salary enhancement.

In April 1987, the **New York** Legislature appropriated $5 million in new money to a 19-year-old educational program for 4-year-olds. This increases the total available for school districts that have large populations of disadvantaged preschoolers to $27 million.

The **Vermont** Legislature approved Governor Kunin's proposal to provide $500,000 for local groups, including education agencies and private organizations, to provide new or expanded educational services for 3- and 4-year-olds who are economically disadvantaged, handicapped, suffering from abuse or neglect, and/or who have limited English language skills. At present, sixty percent of these funds have been allocated to 11 early education programs ($27,300 per program) that will serve 47 communities. The remaining $200,000 will be awarded in November.

Programmatic Actions

Through Chapter 188, early childhood education grants totalling $10.2 million have been distributed to 126 communities in **Massachusetts** for developmentally appropriate preschool programs, enhanced kindergarten, daycare, and transitional first grade programs. It is anticipated that

the remaining $100,000, appropriated for FY 1988, will be awarded to additional communities by November 1987. Seventy-five percent of the available funds are targeted for low-income sites. To be eligible to receive funds, school districts must establish local early childhood advisory councils. The first responsibility of the local council is to conduct an assessment of local early childhood resources and needs.

The **Massachusetts** Board of Education's Statewide Early Childhood Advisory Council has produced a report on future trends in early childhood and day care, draft early childhood program standards, and a draft early childhood teaching certificate.

The **Massachusetts** Department of Education working cooperatively with the Head Start Directors Association (MHSDA) established minimum entry level salaries for positions common to all Head Start programs. The state appropriation (discussed above in Legislative Appropriations) has enabled the majority of the Head Start programs to meet the minimum entry level salaries.

The **Massachusetts** Department of Education worked with MHSDA and with the regional staff of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children, Youth, and Families (ACYF) to develop guidelines for the Head Start Expansion Program. It is anticipated that an additional 400 young children will receive Head Start services through the Head Start Expansion Program. The state program has been designed to build upon and compliment the ongoing federal program.

In December 1986, with $100,000 provided by the Turrell Foundation, the **Vermont** Department of Education chose eight demonstration sites for its Kindergarten Project. Although the legislature did not fund these sites, it did provide interest free loans for start-up costs for any new kindergarten program, to be paid back over a six-year period.

Recommendations

The **New Hampshire** Education Association recommended that the state board of education consider mandatory kindergarten in its new elementary standards. The newly adopted elementary standards strongly urge school districts to provide a public kindergarten.

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

Programmatic Actions

In April 1987, Commissioner Tirozzi in **Connecticut** proposed a study of curriculums, record-keeping, and other issues affecting the migration of students back and forth between Connecticut and Puerto Rico. In August, a task force from Connecticut visited Puerto Rico and in October, a task force from Puerto Rico will visit Connecticut. Outcome of these visits and institutes will include the development of recommendations and

programs to address these issues.

EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR

State Board Actions

The Virgin Islands Board of Education voted to extend the school year to 188 days. The additional eight days will be used for teacher training, the union convention, grading papers, and other academically related activities. The move awaits the governor's signature. Education Commissioner Creque and union leaders have objected to the new schedule claiming that the ruling is in violation of the AFT contract, which was up for renegotiation at the end of August 1987.

GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION

Legislation Passed

Legislation, effective 1 July 1987, established the Rhode Island Academy for Gifted and Talented Children. The aim is to serve gifted and talented high school students in math and/or science by offering enrichment activities.

MINORITY ISSUES

Task Force

In March 1987, Commissioner Tirozzi formed a committee to study racial imbalance between and among school districts within Connecticut. The committee's report is due by 31 October 1987. Annual reports will be due on 1 October in subsequent years.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

General

In July 1987, German Rieckehoff, President of the Olympic Committee of Puerto Rico, criticized the department of education for the lack of importance it places on physical education in the schools. He cited the lack of teachers, facilities, and equipment as well as the under-utilization of what is available.

REGULATION OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Legislation - Proposed

The Puerto Rico Association of Private Schools submitted a preliminary

draft of a bill to the senate to initiate a dialogue about regulating private schools. The association agrees that there is a need to regulate the establishment and operation of private schools. However, it feels that private schools should be free to seek accreditation from the state or from a private organization, since the state should not have a monopoly on accreditation procedures.

REORGANIZATION OF STATE EDUCATION/GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

General

In January 1987, Secretary Roque in **Puerto Rico** announced that the department is launching its own efforts toward restructuring and decentralizing the educational system. She expressed her interest in focusing on the development of a pluralistic system that incorporates parents, teachers, and students in decision making. Her goals are self-sufficiency at the district level. The role of the seven regional offices will be to serve the districts in research, innovation, and technical consultancy. The central level will be a resource center for teaching and will be responsible for evaluating the system.

In December 1986, the **Virgin Islands** Legislative-Executive Fiscal Management Improvement Commission released a report that compared the distribution of government workers in the Virgin Islands and the 12 least populous states on the mainland. It found that, of the 13 jurisdictions, the Virgin Islands has the smallest percentage of government workers employed in education, but the highest in administration, housing, utilities, and social services. These findings may have some implications for a redistribution of government workers.

Legislation Passed

Governor Farrelly's general reorganization, proposed in March, became law in July 1987. Among the changes that affect education in the **Virgin Islands** are:

- local district superintendents have authority over day-to-day operations affecting schools, with authority to delegate their own authority to the school principals;
- the department of education serves as the state agency to meet federal funding requirements, develop evaluation standards for schools, faculty, and students, and administer museums and libraries;
- the board of education must consult with the department of education before it spends federal funds;
- the department of education must report to the board all federal monies pertaining to education;

- the board promulgates rules and regulations to certify schools in the islands;
- the board implements rules and regulations for certification, selection, and appointment of all professional school officials;
- the board certifies teachers within the public school system and licenses teachers in non-public schools;
- the board will consist of 10 rather than nine members, five elected from each district rather than territory wide; and
- the board is required to meet at least four times per year with terms extended from two to four years and an increase in payment from $35 to $40 to members for each meeting attended.

State Board Actions

In June 1987, the Massachusetts Board of Education approved a series of organizational recommendations designed to strengthen department planning, program, and financial management policies and activities and to implement priority initiatives. Policy and program initiatives include school improvement, student performance, teachers and teaching, early childhood education, adult education, and increased services to schools.

RESTRUCTURING SCHOOLS

Programmatic Actions

Sixty schools have indicated an interest in participating in the Maine Department of Educational and Cultural Services' Restructuring Project. The three-year project will provide approximately $50,000 to at least three schools to study fundamental structures, curriculum units, and staffing patterns contributing to effective schools. The commissioner will waive basic regulations governing the use of time, staff, and course requirements in these schools to facilitate full investigation of alternative structures and objectives for schooling.

Although the department will provide funding to only three schools, the project is not an exclusive one. All sixty schools will attend three to six workshops during the first year of the project to assist the department in determining the criteria for selecting schools and planning the project. After three years, the department hopes to arrive at some adaptable models for restructuring other schools in Maine or the nation.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Legislation Passed

Legislation, effective 7 August 1987 until 1 July 1988, requires the consideration of high school performance as well as the Regents Exam scores in the awarding of Regents College Scholarships and Empire State Scholarships of Excellence to students who complete their secondary school education during the 1987-88 school year in **New York**. It also requires the commissioner of education to prepare and submit to the legislature a statistical report that reviews the gender, racial, and ethnic composition of students awarded those scholarships.

Legislation, effective 1 July 1987, created "The Best and the Brightest Scholarship Fund" in **Rhode Island** as well as a scholarship committee charged with administering the fund.

State Board Actions

In September 1986, the **New York** Board of Regents amended the regulations for the Empire State Challenger Scholarships, which are open to all students. The scholarships provide $3,000 per year and are restricted to the cost of tuition. The service obligation must be met in New York.

In November 1986, the **New York** Board of Regents adopted legislative proposals that would adjust upward the state's Tuition Assistance Program. It increased payments for both dependent undergraduate and graduate students with most of the increased support directed to students in the lowest income levels.

SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION

Recommendations of Task Forces and Commissions

A report by Governor Kunin's Business Forum on Education and Economic Development concludes that the manner in which **Vermont** school districts are organized is poor (i.e., the state's ratio of one school board director to every 73 students is the lowest in the nation; each town has at least one school board, and some have two, so that administrators must respond to too many school boards). Among the forum's recommendations were:

- the reorganization of the governing structure of schools so that the number of school boards is reduced and the structure reflects the district system through which Vermont children pass during their 13 years of public schooling (i.e., that the 321 school boards be condensed into 65 functional boards that would operate K-12 for the entire district);
- the establishment of a manageable number of priorities;

- the creation of a system for evaluating the quality of education; and

- the establishment of an incentive program.

Governor Kunin has appointed a commission to study ways to redistrict **Vermont's** school systems. The group will meet five times during October and hold hearings throughout the state on its proposals.

SCHOOL FINANCE

Research

Implementation of revised elementary school standards in **New Hampshire** will cost an estimated $13.6 million statewide. As the legislature plans no additional funding to support these costs, questions regarding state finance have arisen. Revised elementary school standards are pitted against prior legislation (an amendment to the state constitution) that forbids new or modified duties on cities and towns unless the state pays the bill.

Legislation - Passed

The legislature in **Vermont** approved a new school finance foundation formula aimed at assisting districts to spend the amount necessary to meet state standards without raising taxes above the state average. The state-aid bill increased funding for education by $24 million in 1988 and $15 million in 1989 to enable districts to spend $2,800 per elementary school student and $3,500 per secondary school student. Target spending rates and tax rates are modified for each community by a variety of factors, including the number of disadvantaged students.

Legislative Appropriations

From 1 October 1986 to 23 September 1987, Equal Educational Opportunity Grants totalling $105.2 million have been distributed to school districts in **Massachusetts** that are spending less than 85 percent of the state average per-pupil expenditure.

The 1987-88 budget provides $115 million in increased supplemental-supported aid, which is distributed to school districts in low-wealth, high-tax areas in **New York**.

State Board Actions

In November 1986, the **New York** Board of Regents approved a dramatic reshaping of financial assistance to the state's schools. The board's 1987-88 proposal for state aid for schools combined seven previous categorical programs with recommended new funds to target school districts and schools serving children living in poverty, who share a

disproportionate amount of academic failure. Although the legislature rejected the proposal to consolidate the seven categorical programs into a single program, it did accept the governor's and regents' budget priorities for education programs that serve at-risk youth, and targeted much of the spending increase to new and existing programs in that area.

Recommendations of Task Forces and Commissions

In January 1987, the commissioner's Advisory Committee on School Funding, which was created to study the impact of recent legislative education reforms in **Maine**, recommended that the state absorb the $22 million in additional costs that local districts will face in 1987-88.

In March 1987, Governor McKernan formed a study group to review school finance in **Maine**. Of particular concern is how to update the lag time to bring the reimbursement closer to the actual time of expenditures.

Legislation - Proposed

In its 113th Session, the **Maine** Legislature proposed an increase of state aid to 65 percent by 1992 as a means of property tax relief to local districts. That legislation failed to pass, but the issue was held over for further discussion in the second session.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Legislation Passed

The legislature approved revisions to **Vermont's** Public School Approval Standards. Revisions include clarification of vague passages, adjustments to process (e.g., period of time allotted for developing a school improvement plan was extended from 45 to 120 days), and changes in standards (e.g., three years of mathematics and three years of science became five years of mathematics/science, the caseload for elementary guidance counselors was increased from 300 to 400, the span for junior high industrial arts and home economics programs was extended from grades 7 and 8 to grades 6, 7, and 8).

Legislative Appropriations

The **New Hampshire** Legislature appropriated $3.2 million for the biennium for Governor Sununu's Excellence in Education program created in 1985. Funds will be used for improving the teaching of the gifted and talented, the use of technology in the classroom, the improvement of teacher efficiency through the use of computers, and administrative leadership.

The legislature in **New York** continued funding for the Transferring Success Program ($2.3 million) and the Effective Schools Consortia Program ($2.3 million). Through the Transferring Success Program the

state assists schools in acquiring and developing National Diffusion Network programs.

Effective 1 July 1987, the legislature in Rhode Island provided new funding for educational improvement:

- $250,000 for competitive grants for districts to establish dropout prevention programs;
- $100,000 for training parents, particularly those with preschool children;
- $100,000 to train school committee members and school administrators;
- $250,000 for competitive grants to help school districts develop "school-site management" programs;
- $1 million to help school districts teach literacy skills;
- $250,000 for planning literacy screening for children first entering school;
- $300,000 for Commissioner Earhart to implement the findings of the governor's 1991 Task Force on elementary and secondary education;
- $750,000 for vocational education, including $500,000 to reimburse part of the tuition school districts pay to send their students to vocational school;
- $1.5 million for development of the Davies Vocational Technical High School as a model institution; and
- $700,000 for a pilot early childhood program for disadvantaged children.

Additional funding available through recent legislative action in Vermont will enable the department to hire five new school improvement specialists in the fall to work directly with schools on school improvement as it relates to the standards.

Programmatic Actions

Since January, the Connecticut State Department of Education has been providing direct and brokered assistance to planning teams from 23 districts throughout the state as they utilize the Common Core of Learning for professional development, curriculum analysis and change, goal revision, improvement of teaching strategies, development of a local core, assessment of student growth, or other efforts.

Through Chapter 188, School Improvement Grants have been distributed to

elementary and secondary school districts across **Massachusetts**. These annual grants, $10.00 per pupil in each school, are given to schools that form school improvement councils composed of the principal, three teachers, three parents, a member of the community and (at the secondary level) two students. Councils engage in a needs assessment and decision making process to determine their expenditures and then must secure the approval of their school committee. Councils have used their grants to establish new programs, expand student services, purchase needed equipment, and pay for other school-initiated programs and projects.

State Board Actions

The **New Hampshire** Board of Education revised and adopted the minimum standards for elementary schools (K-8). Schools have three years to implement the standards, which are now in place.

The **New Hampshire** Board of Education is presently in the process of revising the minimum standards for junior high schools. It is anticipated that a draft will be released this fall for input from educational organizations.

Recommendations of Task Forces and Commissions

In July 1987, the **Massachusetts** Commission on REACH (Rewarding Educational Achievement) and School Improvement Councils released its report. The commission proposed two strategies to empower the schools and teachers to take responsibility for successful education. First, it proposed to further energize school improvement councils as catalysts for school success whereby parents, teachers, community members, administrators, and students can make crucial decisions that determine the improvement of their schools. To accomplish this task, it recommended that school improvement funds be increased for FY 1988, that funds for technical assistance to councils be provided, and that terms of office be extended beyond one year to build expertise of council members and provide for greater continuity. Second, it proposed to reward those schools and professionals who improve the learning of their students. Its recommendations to achieve that end included the provision of start-up funds for the establishment of a REACH office in the Division of Curriculum and Instruction, the development of criteria for future REACH awards, the establishment of a Council on the Measurement of Student Learning, and the authorization of REACH awards beginning in FY 1989.

The **New Hampshire** Alliance for Effective Schools -- a voluntary school improvement organization composed of members of 13 key education organizations and constituent groups, including the NH School Boards Association, NH Association of School Principals, NH School Administrators Association, NEA-NH, AFT-NH, NH State Board of Education, NH Department of Education, NH House and Senate Education Committees, Business and Industry Association, Governor's Office, The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, and

the University System of NH -- has developed a long-range statewide plan and local school implementation model for school improvement in the state. The Alliance has gained financial support from the Governor's Excellence in Education program and the NH Charitable Trust.

Governor DiPrete and Commissioner Earhart established the governor's 1991 Task Force to look at the appropriateness to Rhode Island of the recommendations in the National Governors Association report, A Time for Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education. The task force's report, released in November 1987, called for:

- new attention to early childhood education;
- improved quality of instruction through smaller classes with greater opportunity for individual instruction;
- increased state financing of schools; and
- organizing schools so that each building's staff, with parental support, is more involved in decision making.

Legislation - Proposed

In January 1987, Governor Kunin proposed a School Improvement Fund for Vermont that would provide incentive money for schools to embark on significant school improvement projects. Funding will allow teachers to propose and implement school and classroom improvements that enhance teachers' working conditions and improve student performance. At present, the bill has made its way through the house and will be considered by the senate in January 1988 when it reconvenes.

SCHOOL VIOLENCE

General

During May 1987, violence and vandalism in the schools in the Virgin Islands received much attention. Cecil Benjamin, a St. Thomas AFT official, stated that administrators do not publicize violent activities in their schools, but they are becoming quite common. He urged administrators to see school violence as a community problem and bring it out into the open. Senator Bingley Richardson has stated his intentions to oversee the revitalization of the Parent Teachers Association's involvement in the Virgin Islands as a strategy to get parents involved in the problem. An editorial in the St. Croix Avis called for learning from the mainland experience about solutions such as all-day monitoring of school hallways, institution of student pass systems, and a willingness to expel repeatedly violent students and to take these students and their parents to court.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Legislative Appropriations

The legislature in **Connecticut** appropriated $350,000 (state board requested $500,000) to provide funds to public and private agencies for interagency efforts to support families with severely handicapped and at-risk infants and toddlers.

The legislature approved a bill to cover the shortfall in the 1986-87 expenditures for special education in **Vermont**.

Legislation Passed

Legislation, effective 25 November 1987, provides that whenever a high school diploma is required by the **New York** State Civil Service Department or by a municipal civil service commission as a minimum requirement for any competitive examination, a high school individualized education plan (IEP) diploma received by a child with a handicapping condition may be accepted in fulfillment of such diploma requirement.

Programmatic Actions

The Special Education Bureau of the **New Hampshire** Department of Education continues to fund the state's Special Education Program Improvement project, which assists districts in profiling the effectiveness of their special education program and planning and implementing improvements. Six new districts will join the six currently involved, representing more than 60 schools.

Legal Services of the **Virgin Islands** was awarded a grant from the Virgin Islands Developmental Disabilities Council to assist parents to organize themselves and become more sensitive about how the department of education spends money on disabled students.

State Board Actions

In January 1987, the **New York** Board of Regents amended a series of regulations pertaining to education of children with handicapping conditions. Among the amendments were the provision of 12-month educational programs for pupils with severe handicapping conditions, a requirement that boards of education prepare district plans for the education of children with handicapping conditions every two years instead of every three years, the establishment of standards for the provision of special education programs and services for pupils enrolled in day treatment programs certified by the office of mental health, and the revision of the name of the committee on the handicapped to the committee on special education.

Recommendations of Task Forces and Commissions

As a larger shortfall is anticipated in special education expenditures in **Vermont** next year, the governor established a Special Commission on Special Education. A final report, which will contain recommendations related to financial and programmatic concerns, is due on 1 December 1987.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Recommendations of Task Forces and Commissions

The Commission on Educational Reform in **Puerto Rico** was created by joint resolution of the governor and the legislature in June 1985. The commission, with equal membership from each chamber of the legislature, was appointed in October 1985. In turn, the commission created a secretariat -- its technical and professional arm -- to develop an overall plan for education reform.

In January 1987, Representative Ronaldo Jarabo announced that the commission and its secretariat will address seven topics this year. These topics are the structure and articulation of the educational system; the definition of goals and reorientation of priorities in the various levels of the system; improving teachers and teaching, including services, salary, training, continuing education, motivation, and the participation of teachers in school decisions; the relationship between the state and the private education sector; interaction between the schools and the community; school financing; and an examination of the vocational education system, with particular focus on ways to strengthen it.

In March 1987, Secretary Roque publicly expressed her frustration at the slowness of the reform process, the lack of a clear philosophy and research-based knowledge, and the lack of teacher participation in the Commission on Educational Reform. She recommended making the district responsible for supervision and development, strengthening the continuing education program at the local level, and changing the existing regulations to give local districts some decision-making power.

TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Governor's Initiatives

In November, Governor Farrelly called upon teachers and unions in the **Virgin Islands** to develop standards for the profession. In addition, he expressed an interest in developing career ladders for teachers.

Legislative Appropriations

The legislature in **Connecticut** continued to support aspects of the Education Enhancement Act of 1986 (EEA) as follows:

- It appropriated $2.8 million for 1987-88 for the Institute for Teaching and Learning to provide training sessions and conferences for educators in the state.

- It appropriated $1.2 million for 1987-88 for the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program to assist beginning teachers through the support of a mentor teacher. As of 1 July 1988, each beginning teacher must be assigned a mentor who is an exemplary classroom teacher.

- It appropriated $2.5 million for 1987-88 for the Professional Development Grant program to provide entitlement grants to each school district to help them implement their five-year plans for professional development mandated under EEA.

- It appropriated $1.9 million for the Cooperating Teacher-Student Teacher Program to assist student teachers by providing cooperating teachers.

- It appropriated $1 million for the Career Incentive Grant to provide incentives for voluntary development and implementation of local career incentive plans.

In April 1987, the **New York** Legislature appropriated $4 million in new money, doubling the total available for the Mentor Teacher-Internship Program next year to $8 million.

Legislation Passed

Following action by the **New York** Board of Regents in March 1987, the legislature amended section 3033 of the Education Law (effective 5 August 1987) to allow participation in the Mentor Teacher-Internship Program by any first year teacher holding a provisional or permanent teaching certificate, temporary license, regular license, or temporary per diem certificate for a field in which no licensed teacher is available.

Effective 5 August 1987, portions of the Education Law in **New York** were amended to allow pre-kindergarten and adult education teachers to be eligible for excellence in teaching apportionment funds.

Programmatic Actions

In January 1987, the **Connecticut** State Department of Education awarded two-year grants to five school districts in the state to develop model plans for teacher incentive programs. The purpose of these grants is to

encourage growth and development of leadership potential of professional educators, recognize these educators, and provide opportunities for them to serve as educational models and learners.

The Celebration of Excellence program, funded by the Southern New England Telephone Company and the Connecticut General Assembly, recognized creative Connecticut teachers and their innovative curriculum projects.

The Maine Department of Educational and Cultural Services and the University of Maine have submitted a planning proposal to the Council of Chief State School Officers to establish a statewide coordinating office for professional development activities for teachers and administrators.

The chancellor of higher education and the commissioner of education in Maine have been meeting monthly to explore new ways to connect programs of both entities with people and needs at the local level (i.e., grounding programs in districts).

Under Chapter 188, a formula grant program enables school districts in Massachusetts to award up to $2,500 to public school teachers who take on expanded responsibilities within their schools or school districts. Expanded responsibilities for these teachers (formally known as Horace Mann Teachers) may include, but not be limited to, teacher training, curriculum/program development, special assistance to dropouts or potential dropouts, inservice instruction and consultancy, development and evaluation of teaching resources, and school-home-community liaison. The program was implemented in the 1986-87 school year.

The Lucretia Crocker program, implemented in Massachusetts in the 1986-87 school year, provides an avenue for the dissemination and replication of exemplary educational programs throughout the Commonwealth. Lucretia Crocker Fellows are nominated by their local school committee and approved by the Massachusetts Board of Education. Each has developed, implemented, and/or worked in an exemplary educational program and has the personal and professional skills to promote the dissemination and replication of that program. The fellowships offer sabbatical leaves to the teachers to provide the technical assistance, training, and monitoring necessary to ensure that their programs are successfully transferred from school to school.

In April 1987, the Puerto Rico Community Foundation announced the continuation of its mini-grant program to teachers for special projects.

In May 1987, the Commission on Educational Reform in Puerto Rico sponsored a roundtable discussion on the improvement of the quality of teaching.

State Board Actions

In September 1986, the New York Board of Regents established regulations for the Mentor Teacher-Internship Program. The program provides

$4 million in state aid to support local mentor-teacher internships for first year probationary students. Among the regulations promulgated by the board are: experienced mentors will be released from their regular teaching duties for at least 10 percent of the time; interns will be assigned no more than 80 percent of a normal teaching load; and mentors will be permanently certified in the same area as the intern and have demonstrated mastery of pedagogical and subject matter skills, superior teaching abilities, and interpersonal skills.

In March 1987, the **New York** Board of Regents voted to require one year, part-time internships for all working, uncertified teachers. Starting in September 1987, uncertified teachers -- hired on an emergency basis -- would be released from 20 percent of their teaching duties to work in a structured internship program. Some experienced teachers would also be released from 20 percent of their duties to serve as mentors. The uncertified teachers must gain certification within three years, while the school districts employing them must submit formal plans to the state describing how they will provide the required staff development and professional support.

Recommendations of Task Forces and Commissions

In July 1987, the Special Commission on the Conditions of Teaching in **Massachusetts** released its report. Among the new initiatives it proposed to improve the conditions of teaching and learning within the state are: the establishment of creative, professional models of school organization and governance (Carnegie Schools), which restructure the environment for teaching; the development of a new grants program (Improving School Performance Program) for individual schools using educational achievement rather than expenditures as the chief criterion for eligibility; and the creation of a grants program to support the development of a network of "Professional Development Schools" throughout the Commonwealth. In addition, it proposed a 10 percent expansion of the existing Horace Mann Teachers Grant program and an increase in the minimum teachers' salary to $20,000.

A legislative commission has been established in **Rhode Island** to study the implications of possible implementation within the state of the recommendations of the reports of the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy and The Holmes Group regarding teacher preparation.

Legislation - Proposed

Representative Paul Sherlock of **Rhode Island** introduced a bill, designed to increase teacher retention, that would establish a mentoring program for first year teachers and those new to the state with less than four years of experience. The proposed bill requests $200,000 for implementation of a pilot program in several cities.

TEACHER EVALUATION

Legislative Appropriations

The **Connecticut** Legislature appropriated $1 million for the Teacher Evaluation Grant to assist local school districts in evaluating teacher performance.

Programmatic Actions

The **Massachusetts** Department of Education will be issuing a request for proposals in October for the development, validation, field testing, and administration of a communication and language skills exam for prospective teachers. Pilot testing is scheduled to begin in the fall of 1988.

The department of education in **Puerto Rico**, the Angel Ramos Foundation, and the Association of University Presidents have contracted with the local College Board to develop a teacher's examination. It will not be used for certification purposes, but the scores will be used together with university grades and experience to place teachers.

State Board Actions

In May, the **Massachusetts** Board of Education adopted a policy statement to guide development of the teacher competency testing program for new teachers, which is a requirement of Chapter 188.

TEACHER NEGOTIATIONS

Legislation Passed

The 1986-87 school year brought the first year of implementation of the new state law in **Rhode Island** that provides mandatory mediation in teacher contract disputes.

In May 1987, the **Connecticut** Legislature passed a bill that gives teachers the right to negotiate the school day, year, and calendar.

TEACHER SALARIES

Legislative Appropriations

The **Connecticut** Legislature continued to support a raise in teachers' salaries as it appropriated $116.9 million for 1987-88 for teacher salary and related grants to provide funds to assist districts in minimum salary aid, salary enhancement aid, general aid, and staffing ratio aid.

Through Chapter 188, a total of $51.3 million has been distributed in Professional Development Grants to 385 operating school districts in **Massachusetts** from October 1986 to June 1987. These grants were made to provide additional compensation for teachers. Distribution of the funds was determined through collective bargaining.

Grants totalling $6 million (from October 1986 to June 1987) have been made to school districts and eligible collaboratives in **Massachusetts** in order to raise the minimum teacher salary to $18,000. Funding is determined by the number of teachers in the district earning less than $18,000 and the difference between $18,000 and their existing salaries.

The **New York** Legislature appropriated $38 million in new money for the one-year-old "Excellence in Teaching" program. That brings the total amount available to school districts to raise teachers' salaries next year to $133 million.

TEACHER SUPPLY AND DEMAND

General

Teacher shortages plague junior and senior high schools in the **Virgin Islands**. Much of this shortage is blamed on low salaries. The teachers received an increase in pay during the 1986-87 school year.

Research

The Report on the Status of Teacher Supply and Demand in Massachusetts, prepared by the **Massachusetts** Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER) for the Massachusetts Board of Regents of Higher Education and the Massachusetts State Board of Education, was released in June 1987. Its findings revealed that the supply of teachers in the Commonwealth will be adequate through 1991; however, all things remaining constant, a shortfall is likely after 1991. Identified as an area of current and chronic shortage is bilingual education. Other areas with initial surpluses that will be followed by shortages in the early 1990s are English, general sciences, mathematics, biology, chemistry, social studies, and vocational studies. Proposed changes, based on the findings of the MISER study, are likely to be put forth in the fall.

In August 1986, a study conducted by the **Vermont** Department of Education indicated that the state was losing 12-15 percent of its teachers each year. Of these, one in five returned to teaching. Of those leaving in the 1984-85 school year, 47 percent were younger than 35.

Legislation Passed

The **New York** State Education Department, in cooperation with local boards of education, unions, and colleges, will establish a Teacher Career

Recruitment Clearinghouse to collect and maintain data regarding teaching opportunities and qualified applicants; to collect and disseminate information concerning financial assistance for the education of those interested in a teaching career, employment opportunities, and certification or licensure requirements; to promote clearinghouse activities in the media and at appropriate educational institutions; and to report annually to the legislature and the governor on the supply of, and demand for, teachers and other professional educators.

Legislative Appropriations

In April 1987, the legislature in **New York** appropriated $1 million for a new program, "Teacher Opportunity Corps," that will distribute funds to higher education institutions for initiatives to draw members of minorities into teaching.

State Board Actions - Proposed

In December 1986, Commissioner Raynolds proposed an apprentice teacher position to help fill the anticipated 10,000-20,000 teaching positions predicted to be open in **Massachusetts** in the next five years.

Recommendations of Task Forces and Commissions

In July 1987, the **Vermont** Teacher Shortage Task Force released its final report. The task force, convened and cosponsored by the department of education and the Vermont state colleges, identified the state's need for additional well-qualified teachers by the year 2000 and presented a series of recommendations in areas of teacher recruitment, teacher preparation and certification, compensation, and working conditions. Using the task force's recommendations, deans of the state's colleges and the department of education staff will develop an action plan by February 1988.

TECHNOLOGY

Programmatic Actions

In June 1987, the **New York** State Education Department awarded $15 million to 91 new and continuing teacher resource and computer training centers through their local school districts or BOCES. The centers were created by the legislature in 1984 to improve teaching skills and to train teachers in the educational applications of computer technology.

State Board Actions

In September 1986, the **New York** Board of Regents established criteria for

awarding competitive grants to school districts and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) for the Technology Network Ties (TNT) program. TNT is a model program designed to test innovative uses of technology for administrative and interactive instructional purposes.

VALUES EDUCATION

General

Throughout the year, Governor Cuomo, the **New York** Board of Regents, and the New York State Education Department emphasized the need for the teaching of values.

In April 1987, Governor Hernandez-Colon announced that the **Puerto Rico** Department of Education will begin implementing a curriculum on values education during the next school year.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

State Board Actions

The **Rhode Island** Board of Regents adopted a new vocational education policy, replacing the one in effect since 1975. The policy provides for equal access to vocational education regardless of age, sex, race, English proficiency, handicaps, or other disadvantages. In addition, it promises a full range of programs and supplemental services for students needing special help and requires involvement of business, labor, educators, parents, students, and others in program development. The department of education will draft regulations by spring 1988.

Recommendations of Task Forces and Commissions

In **Puerto Rico**, the Speaker of the House Ronaldo Jarabo has called for the revitalization of vocational education. He announced the creation of a subcommittee of the Commission on Educational Reform to make recommendations to improve that system.

Legislation - Proposed

In early January 1988, the **Vermont** House Education Committee will consider a bill that has implications regarding governance, funding, and access to vocational education in the state. Presently, 90 percent of the state's vocational education programs are provided through 16 regional centers governed by the district in which they are located. The intent of the proposed bill is to broaden this governance structure by creating a regional advisory board with responsibility for oversight. Seated on this board will be representatives from all of the local

districts in the region that send students to the center. In terms of funding, the proposal would separate the costs incurred by the vocational center into two categories: fixed costs (costs related to governance, custodial services, etc.) and tuition. The fixed or access costs (approximately 20 percent of the total costs) will be paid for by all of the participating towns based on their total eleventh and twelfth grade enrollment. Each district that sends a student to the regional vocational center would have a varying portion of the tuition reimbursed by the state. Currently, the state reimburses 50 percent of the tuition for students in sending districts, but does not reimburse the tuition of students sent to the center by the host district or towns without high schools. A proposed alteration in language would state that "every student should have a genuine opportunity" for access to vocational education.